

# W5YI

America's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

## REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable.

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Fred Maia, W5YI, Editor, P. O. Box 565101, Dallas TX 75356  
Electronic mail: [fmaia@prodigy.net](mailto:fmaia@prodigy.net) Website: <http://www.w5yi.org>  
Tel. 817-461-6443 FAX: 817-548-9594

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### INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT: ARMY MARS IS NOT "OPERATIONALLY READY"

*"Army MARS provides communications support for federal agencies in responding to emergency situations on an international, national, and local basis as an addition to normal military communications." Mission: Army Military Affiliate Radio System*

The Military Affiliate Radio System (or MARS as it is known) is a U.S. Department of Defense sponsored program, established as a separately managed and operated program by the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

MARS got its start in 1925 when an Army Signal Corps Captain decided to enlist the talents of volunteer Amateur Radio operators to train soldiers in the then new technology of radio. The Army Amateur Radio System (AARS) continued as a Signal Corp extra-curricular activity until World War II when all amateur radio operation was suspended. There were approximately 60,000 FCC licensed Amateurs at the time and some 5600 of those Amateurs were members of the AARS.

After the war, the AARS was reactivated and two years later became the Military Amateur Radio System when the Air Force was created as a separate service. It was later renamed to the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) in 1948. In early 1963, Army MARS and Air Force MARS was joined by the Navy-Marine Corps MARS. Each of the three MARS Chiefs is responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of their respective programs.

Army MARS Headquarters is located in southern Arizona at Fort Huachuca near the Mexican border. It is the largest of the three programs supposedly overseeing approximately 5,000 members. Air

Force MARS, located at Scott AFB, Illinois, and Navy-Marine Corps MARS (which also includes the U.S. Coast Guard), located in Washington, D.C. each have an affiliate volunteer population of approximately 2,000 members.

#### The mission of MARS

According to the *Department of Defense*, the mission of U.S. Army Military Affiliate Radio System is "...to provide emergency communications on a local, national, or international basis as an alternative communications capability." Operating on military frequencies, the program relies on both civilian licensed amateur radio operators and military MARS members to provide communications support in times of crisis.

To become a MARS member, a volunteer must be 18 years of age, be an FCC-licensed radioamateur and have a radio station capable of operating on HF or VHF MARS military spectrum.

The Army MARS website located at: [www.asc.army.mil/mars](http://www.asc.army.mil/mars) says their mission is to "...provide auxiliary communications for military, civil, and/or disaster officials during periods of emergency."

Their home page claims a "volunteer force of over 5,000 dedicated and skilled amateur radio operators" that keep Army MARS ready to handle vital emergency communications."

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## MARS member files Freedom of Information request

One Army MARS member took issue with the publicized emergency communications readiness and reported activity of the MARS program and filed a *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)* request for a copy of a recent investigation into Army MARS by the Department of the Army's Inspector General (DAIG). The multi-page released excerpt from the audit report was very interesting to say the least ...and extremely critical of MARS value as an emergency communications medium in times of crisis.

The DAIG investigation began in the Spring of 2001 but its findings were not made public until June 2002. It has been reported that the full version of the actual audit report was many times the 41-pages that were released under the FOIA. Much of the full report could not be released due to Privacy Act and Law Enforcement concerns.

## **MARS support to state and local agencies**

According to the May 22, 2002 investigative account, the MARS mission is somewhat different from that stated on their Home Page. The IG said (and we quote) "The focus of this mission is federal support and not support to state and local agencies. There are other organizations already in place to support state and local agencies (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, RACES, American Radio Relay League ARRL, etc.) Without the authority of the Stafford Act, direct support of state and local agencies by agencies of the federal government is prohibited."

"All Federal Emergency Support to individual states starts with the Stafford Act." Under the *Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act*, the Director of the *Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)* has primary responsibility for the Federal Response Plan (FRP.)

"Without a Presidential declaration of an emergency, MARS has no authority to provide support at the local and state level." The Governor of the state involved must request the declaration of emergency. There are about 50 Presidentially Declared Disasters a year ...460 over the past ten years, the report said.

## **MARS fails to plan for disaster communications**

According to the audit, MARS stations "participate in periodic exercises to maintain operator proficiency...." A DOD directive states that MARS "provides direct support" to the government in the event of a national disaster. But apparently they are doing a very poor job of it.

The Army Inspector General found that "MARS does not plan or train for this contingency mission nor does NMCS (the National Military Command System) include MARS in its planning, training, or exercise plan."

Included in the findings, is information confirming that Army MARS planning and exercise typically operates in a 'closed loop system' that results in MARS participants

talking to each other rather than providing point-to-point connectivity for supported customers. "These issues all point to a lack of appropriate planning and performance in providing actual emergency communications support to other agencies, particularly first responders."

Also mentioned in the report is that Army MARS may be "...focused more on socializing between operators than mission accomplishments." Another MARS member told us that "The entire program lacks any significant value in its current configuration and direction..." and that its current "organizational structure accomplishes little beyond recreational pursuit."

The audit report concludes that MARS fails to support military wartime communications and recommends that MARS include training to support NMCS.

## **MARS fails to participate in NCS training, meetings**

The National Communications System (NCS) was formed in 1962 after the Cuban missile crisis. The goal of NCS is to provide communications support to critical Government functions during emergencies. The system links the communications systems of some 22 Federal agencies and departments, focusing on interconnectivity and survivability ...especially during a disaster.

Its membership includes such high level agencies as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Dept. of Defense, Dept. of State, Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and several others.

The National Communications System has a program developed through its member organizations called the SHARed RESources (SHARES) High Frequency (HF) Radio Program. The purpose of SHARES is to provide a single, interagency emergency message handling system by bringing together existing HF radio resources of Federal, state and industry organizations when normal communications are destroyed or unavailable for the transmission of national security and emergency preparedness information.

The DAIG audit said that "MARS is also a member of the NCS SHARES HF Interoperability Working Group which assists, helps identify, records, and tracks issues affecting HF interoperability in the Federal government." But the Inspector General found that "There is no indication that MARS has participated in the planning, training, or participated in actual incidents with [NCS emergency management systems] or has actually attended or participated in any of the [Working Group] sessions." The DAIG said that MARS should assign someone to represent the program and participate as an active member.

## **MARS fails miserably on September 11**

Another issue that the DAIG investigated is the accusation that MARS fails to support military, civil and/or disaster officials during declared emergencies with needed radio communications. Specifically mentioned is



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the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 when the city of New York experienced a massive communications failure.

"This would have been an excellent opportunity for MARS to utilize its VHF capabilities and then to use HF links to pass real world traffic from the EOC [Emergency Operations Center] in New York to decision makers in Washington, D.C.," the audit report reads.

"With critical communications outages in New York and Washington, MARS links would have been invaluable for coordinating emergency responses and relief activities. Both the cell phone network and the regular phone system was down as was much of the power around the disaster site."

"MARS has the capability of establishing communications in this type of environment, but without planning and training, this capability cannot be realized. Simply stated, no one knew that MARS was there."

The Inspector General concluded that Army MARS is not prepared to execute its primary mission of providing emergency communications support. "In every presidentially declared emergency where Army MARS claimed participation, the same pattern was demonstrated."

"The potential for Army MARS to provide support in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 was phenomenal. Phone links from New York to Washington alone would have relayed critical information to the decision makers and would have helped make up for the loss of key communication links lost in the disaster. The MARS VHF capabilities could have assisted in clarifying the federal emergency response. Computer centers could have been linked via MARS HF links; and phone patches could have placed key individuals in contact with their organizations."

Although Army MARS established a radio net and remained on the air for several days the DAIG found that MARS were not prepared to handle needed communications and did very little in the way of emergency assistance "...except conduct radio checks." The audit report said MARS needed to implement a training program, participate with FEMA and NCS as a full participant and develop a program to inform the military and Federal emergency operations organizations of its capabilities.

## MARS fails to provide timely communications

Historically, the most visible feature of Army MARS has traditionally been morale and welfare communications. The DAIG report mentions 'MARSgrams,' radioed morale-boosting messages that were handled for military service personnel during the Korean, Vietnam and Desert Storm conflicts.

"According to numbers provided by the Chief, Army MARS, 180,000 MARSgrams and 60,000 radiophone patches were made for service members deployed during Desert Shield/Storm alone." The DAIG agreed that evidence amply demonstrates that MARS continues to have the capability to make phone patches and send MARSgrams supporting soldiers around the world.

It said one of the problems identified was that MARSgrams were not handled in a timely manner. "Procedures need to be established which will eliminate MARSgrams remaining in collection boxes for weeks on end."

The DAIG recommended that procedures be developed to reduce time required to process MARSgrams and to expand phone patch capabilities for use in supporting other Federal agencies. A public relations program should be established since "Many soldiers simply do not know about MARSgrams or phone patches."

## MARS membership decreases, equipment poor

The Inspector General agreed with the accusation that Army MARS does not furnish adequate training in military communications equipment, techniques and procedures. It said that although it attempts to increase MARS participants "...the Army MARS program has lost 55% of its membership in the last 20 months. ...to less than 2,200 volunteer members." The number of active duty military personnel and paid staff associated with the Army MARS program is minimal. The Chief, Army MARS is a GS civilian position.

"The fact that recruitment is an extremely high priority, especially with the current budget constraints, is not the question. The actual issue is the question of whether Army MARS furnishes appropriate training...." MARS is not able to train in military communications equipment which must be remedied.

"Even though the Army does allow Army MARS members to participate in an equipment 'reutilization' program, radio equipment in this program is notoriously out of date and has very limited use to the individual members."

Currently funding for Army MARS does not include acquisition of new equipment or even maintenance of the older equipment.

## MARS is "misleading"

According to the MARS website, "MARS has a long and proud history of providing world-wide auxiliary emergency communications during times of need. Our volunteer force of over 5,000 dedicated and skilled amateur radio operators is the back bone of our program. The benefit of MARS membership is enjoying an amateur radio hobby through the ever-expanding horizon of MARS. Our affiliate members' continued unselfish support of our mission keeps Army MARS Proud, Professional, and Ready."

The Army's Inspector General took issue with MARS publicized outward appearance versus reality and asserted that "The presentation of information to the chain-of-command, to the Army MARS membership, and to the public by the Army MARS staff was misleading and deceptive." It recommended that the MARS Web Page be reviewed and that the membership numbers be revised to reflect current affiliate numbers. Even some of



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the 2,200 members may no longer be active.

The report also said that Major Disaster Support (Success Stories) should be deleted since "MARS was not mentioned as a participant by FEMA during any presidentially declared emergency during the past ten years," nor have they participated in any development or planning sessions of FEMA. "There is not a single mention of Army MARS or Army MARS support by either FEMA or NCS during any of the 460 Presidentially Declared Major Disasters," the DAIG remarked.

In short, the Army Inspector General's investigative audit found very little that Army MARS is doing ...or doing right, to support the emergency or disaster communications needs of the U.S. Federal or civil government.

## CHIEF, ARMY MARS REGARDING INVESTIGATION

It is my understanding that the DAIG investigation was undertaken as a result of a request by Congress, specifically Rep. Jim Ryun's (R-KS) and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX).

The Chief of Army MARS is Bob Sutton, N7UZY (Technician Class) of Sierra Vista, Arizona. I telephoned him and read him the prior story, a version of which will also run in the October issue of *Monitoring Times* magazine. In the interest of balance, I thought it was only fair to let him know that I had a copy of the DAIG Investigative Report and give him an opportunity to publicly respond to its allegations.

Bob Sutton acknowledged that he also had seen the audit report but that he could not respond to it. He said Army policy dictated that all public statements had to be funneled through the Fort Huachuca Public Affairs Office.

I received a telephone call the following day from a Carol Conner, a very pleasant lady who said she was the "U.S. Army Public Affairs Officer." She asked me to e-mail her a copy of the story which I did. She confirmed receipt and said she would get back to me. On Friday, August 23rd, she e-mailed me the following response:

## US ARMY SIGNAL COMMAND'S RESPONSE

"The Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG) investigative report on the Army Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) raises valid points. US Army Signal Command (USASC) is in the process of reviewing the findings and implementing changes.

Like many other military programs, Army MARS is working with constrained resources after years of budget cuts, and must compete with other organizations to fund sometimes-unforeseen expenditures. That said; US Army Signal Command remains committed to the MARS mission.

The Army MARS budget has increased by a total of \$60,000 over the last four fiscal years and the ASC command has initiated funding requests to upgrade equipment located in overseas gateway stations. A contract was also let in September 1999 and implemented in Octo-

ber 1999 that hired full-time operators at both the Eastern and Western Gateways, which are located at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., and Fort Detrick, Md., making them 24-hour operations. Phase two of the contract, implemented in October 2000, added two additional positions (Eastern and Western area coordinators).

As a result of the DAIG investigative findings, Army Signal Command has taken actions to update Army MARS procedural manuals. A new Army MARS Net Plan was published in August 2001 and revised in July 2002. A revised National Emergency Operations plan was published in April 2002. Several new training guides have also been updated. The Net Control Station Guide was published in October 2001. The Essential Elements of Information Reporting Guide was published in March 2002 and a totally new Basic Training Manual was released in July 2002.

The DAIG report cited discrepancies on our website. The Army MARS website is currently under review, changes have been made and the site will be updated on a regular basis.

Army Signal Command is also dedicated to getting out the word about the great things Army MARS volunteers are doing. As we transition to US Army Network Enterprise Technology Command, we will be establishing a presence in the National Capital Region and will have a designated representative attending the Shared Resources High Frequency Radio Program meetings as well as other events that require an Army MARS voice.

The USASC command believes Army MARS is a viable program. We remain committed to its mission and the thousands of volunteers who support it. US Army Signal Command will become US Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Army Signal Command, effective October 1, 2002."

## AMATEUR RADIO STATION CALL SIGNS

...sequentially issued as of the first of September 1, 2002:

District	Extra	Advanced	Tech./General/Novice	
0	AB0WR	KI0SK	→	KC0NZE
1	AB1BL	KE1ME	→	KB1IRV
2	AB2PO	KG2RR	→	KC2KDS
3	AA3ZZ	KF3ED	→	KB3IMX
4	AG4VQ	KV4GL	→	KG4UUZ
5	AD5LT	KM5XR	→	KD5TRF
6	AE6IF	KR6FD	→	KG6MYB
7	AC7VT	KK7XI	→	KD7SMF
8	AB8PR	KI8KD	→	KC8UQW
9	AB9GN	KG9QU	→	KC9CHW
Hawaii	→	AH6RO	NH7OH	WH6DGT
Alaska	→	AL7RR	KL1JC	WL7CVQ
Virgin Isl.	→	KP2CS	NP2LY	WP2AIP
Puerto Rico	WP3T	KP3BN	WP3SW	WP4NOZ

[Source: FCC Amateur Service Database, Washington, DC]



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## CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

**D**VD player and disk sales are skyrocketing. More than 30 million DVD players have been sold since they were introduced in the Spring of 1997.

Movie DVD sales are a \$5 billion annual business. But they can't play the next generation HDTV (high definition) resolution offered by today's digital monitors. At least not yet.

**T**oshiba and NEC are introducing a new DVD format next year which uses blue (instead of the existing infrared) laser technology. The advantage of a blue-violet laser is its shorter wavelength which allows higher capacity.

In CD and DVD players, infrared lasers are beamed down onto the spinning disc where they "read" a pattern of microscopic pits that represent the 1s and 0s of digital data. Replacing the infrared laser with a shorter-wavelength blue laser allows a finer beam, enabling it to read and write more closely packed bits of information on a given area of disk space - as much as five times more than the present DVD limit of 4.7 gigabytes.

Toshiba's new blue laser format can store 15 to 20 gigabytes on a single side of a DVD disk - enough for most HDTV quality movies. Toshiba technology will also allow the older red-laser DVDs to be played on new blue-laser DVD players, a very important plus.

**A** format battle of VHS vs. Betamax videotape proportion may be looming. A little history. You may remember that Sony came out first with their Betamax magnetic tape recording system in the mid-1970s. JVC and Panasonic declined to offer it. Instead JVC had their own system which doubled Betamax's recording capacity. A price war ensued and Sony's market share declined. By 1988, VHS players commanded 95% of the VCR market and Sony switched to VHS.

Last February, Sony, Philips, Samsung, LG, Thomson, Hitachi, Pioneer, Matsushita and Sharp introduced a different Blu-ray DVD format which is incompatible with that advanced by Toshiba and NEC.

The Sony Blu-ray format offers more storage, up to 27 gigabytes of storage on a single side of a disk. But Sony Blu-ray format DVD recorders will not be able to play

current red laser DVD disks. Sony says it will start mass-production of the Blu-ray diode in April, 2003.

The format issue is being sorted out by the DVD Forum, an industry group of more than 230 companies that defines DVD format standards. Toshiba is also working at developing higher density Blu-ray technology that is compatible with existing DVDs and suggested that Blu-ray may still become the industry standard.

It is predicted that high-definition DVD players which can record and play blue laser discs will initially become available in the Japanese market next year. The rest of the world will have to wait until 2004 or 2005.

## EMERGING COMMUNICATIONS

**L**ast year, the Consumer Electronics Association projected digital TV, of which HD has the highest quality programming, would be in 2.1 million homes by the end of this year.

The reality is that the number of digitally connected homes is approaching 3 million. Of those homes, only 350,000 receive HD programming, according to the consumer group.

But with HD programming on the rise and the cost of a TV dropping, the original estimate of 10.5 million digital sets by 2006 seems conservative.

ABC has nearly concluded arrangements to carry this season's Super Bowl in high definition. (Reported by USA Today)

**N**ice work if you can get it. Rumors are rampant that former President Bill Clinton is about to become the first ex-U.S. president to host his own daytime TV talk show. He is in talks with CBS and wants an annual salary of between \$30 and \$50 million ...about half of what Oprah Winfrey makes.

**W**ireless emergency network to enable crisis communications among Local, State and Federal Agencies. One of the problems on Sept. 11 was the inability to communicate at ground zero due to incompatible equipment, confusion and disrupted and overloaded communications.

To prevent that from happening in the nation's capital, IBM and a partnership of public safety and transportation agencies are building a secure wireless emer-

gency response system for the Washington D.C. area. Congress has authorized a \$20 million budget for the project.

Designed to help handle unexpected events, such as natural disasters, traffic collisions, fires or terrorist threats, the Capital Wireless Integrated Network (CapWIN) will enable officials from more than 40 local, state, and federal agencies to communicate with each other in real time. The network will run on standard PCs, handhelds and cell phones and may serve as a model for other areas of the country. <www.capwinproject.com>.

**A**s reported in our last issue, the FCC has fined junk-fax broadcaster <fax.com> more than \$5 million. Now comes word that a group in California has filed a \$2.2 trillion (that's 2,200 billion!) lawsuit against the firm for inundating the nation's fax machines with millions of unwanted advertising messages.

The suit seeks class action status and damages (of \$1,500 per unsolicited faxed ad) from Fax.com, its telecom provider (Cox Communications) and its advertisers. Fax.com said they had a "constitutional right" to advertise by fax. Check out: <www.junkfax.org>.

## COMPUTERS & SOFTWARE

**D**eparting from its direct sales strategy, Dell Computer Corp., the world's largest PC maker, will begin offering unbranded "white box" desktop personal computers to dealers configured to their specifications.

"No-name Clones," as they are called, are a \$3 billion business in the U.S. and hold a 30 percent share of the market.

**H**ewlett-Packard, the world's second-largest computer maker, will begin selling a low cost (\$549) business computer that includes a low-cost Athlon processor from Advanced Micro Devices.

**G**artner Dataquest said 10.9 million -- or 3.5 percent less -- PCs are being sold in the U.S. Dell's first quarter PC shipments grew 34.3 percent to 4.16 million, or 12.8 percent of the global market. Compaq, now owned by Hewlett-Packard, shipped 3.9 million units during the first quarter, or 12.1 percent.



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The U.S. market accounts for one-third of all PCs sold in the world.

**Russian chess grandmaster, Garry Kasparov will face "Deep Junior," the reigning computer chess champion** developed by two Tel Aviv programmers Oct. 1-13 in Jerusalem. The six game match is being billed as "Man vs. Machine, The Sequel." The winner gets \$300,000, the loser \$200,000. A tie will result in an even split of the prize money. Kasparov, the world's number one ranked chess player, also gets an additional \$500,000 "appearance fee."

The "Deep Junior" chess program is commercially available at less than \$100. He has been furnished an updated copy of the program and a match archive which he is using to train for the competition. It is Kasparov's first computer game outing since losing to IBM's "Deep Blue" five years ago. See: <www.kasparov.com>.

## GADGETS & GIZMOS

**Portable pocket-sized computer keyboard is operated and held with just one hand.** It produces all the usual characters with relatively few keys which are pressed in groups called "chords."

John McKown, a Scottsdale, Arizona inventor has patented a wearable, one-handed computer keyboard that can be used anywhere. The "Stealthy Keyboard" fits inside a cupped palm, hooks around the thumb and forefinger, and its 8 keys are controlled by using four fingertips to press the keys.

Using combinations of key presses it is possible to create 256 different characters, which easily covers all the keys available on a standard QWERTY keyboard. It takes a while to learn all of the different chords. Check out a prototype of this weird device at: <www.chordite.com>

## INTERNET & WORLD WIDE WEB

**The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says teen drivers are more than twice as likely to be involved in vehicle crashes compared to adults.**

Road Safety International, Inc. (Cambridge, Calif.) has developed a low price

"black box" that lets parents monitor the driving habits of teenagers. The RS-3000 On-Board Computer System fits under the driver's seat and tracks speed, turns, hard braking, jackrabbit-starts, unsafe backing, seat belt use and gives off increasingly loud beeps when the driver ignores good driving habits. (For example: prior to backing, the driver must press a button indicating that he/she has looked behind the vehicle and in the mirrors.)

The \$280 black box (available next month) is a scaled-down version of one that the company sells to ambulance companies, police and fire departments for \$3,500.

The device plugs into the connector on cars that mechanics use to diagnose problems. All sorts of driving data – including a running odometer reading, the number of miles driven and G-force on driver and passengers – is later downloaded from the box's memory card into a personal computer. The software rates the driver on a scale from 1 to 10 (best.)

An upgraded version will be introduced next year that, using GPS technology, will allow parents to check a website to determine the exact location of the car. More info at: <www.RoadSafety.com>.

**Playing video games over the Internet at high speeds will be very big in the future.** The big three (Nintendo, Sony and Microsoft) are all gearing up for it.

Sony is already selling a \$39.99 network adapter for their Playstation-2 which allows a PS2 to connect to the Net via dial-up or high-speed broadband connection. At launch a total of 13 games were available supporting Internet play. And Nintendo will be offering one shortly for its GameCube console.

And Microsoft plans to introduce online play for its Xbox game on November 15. Microsoft will sell a \$50 Xbox Live starter kit that includes a headset microphone, a one-year subscription to the service, and software that allows the Xbox to tap into an existing broadband Internet connection. Microsoft said it will spend \$2 billion over the next few years to build out the Xbox Live network and develop the next generation of its game console.

**AOL Time Warner, the corporate owner of the America Online Internet access service, also owns the Time Warner cable systems.** Most AOL users have cable systems other than Time Warner. So, in the future, the

America Online Internet service will be wholesaled to AT&T broadband and its pending merger partner, Comcast cable who will distribute the cable modem service over their cable lines.

The arrangement is similar to satellite-delivered content services (like HBO, CNN, ESPN and Showtime) being wholesaled to cable companies for re-distribution over their "wire." AT&T-Comcast will receive about \$38 a month from America Online for every high-speed AOL customer served by its cable lines.

After years of trying to persuade cable operators to lease their lines to them, AOL Time Warner has come to the realization that the best way to distribute AOL is to package America Online as if it were a premium movie channel.

High speed AOL users will be billed by the cable company at a monthly retail price (about \$50.) Customers who need Internet tech support must first call the cable company – just as consumers who have a problem with HBO call their cable or satellite provider.

America-On-Line will be offering the high speed broadband Internet to ten million homes on AT&T-Comcast cable lines within two years. Another 9 million homes will be added in the third year. Cable companies will also receive a percentage on transactions made online.

**Company wants a royalty for every time a Web surfer links to another page.** A federal court has ruled that BT Group's lawsuit charging that it owns the patent on hyperlinks – those mouse clicks that send you to another Web page – is without merit.

The firm had sued Prodigy Communications Corp. for infringement of its 1976 patent on computer linking. Although the World Wide Web wasn't created until the mid-1980s, the firm said its patent applied to hyperlinking. Had they won, it would have been the first of many suits against Internet Service Providers seeking damages.

**The sales of music CDs are down 7 percent in the first six months of this year** and the Recording Industry Association of America blames the decline on the ability of listeners to easily copy digital music and trade the files.

An RIAA survey shows that consumers are downloading more files, burning more CDs and acquiring twice as many burned CDs as last year. The RIAA's study was based on 860 music consumers



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with Internet access between the ages of 12 and 54.

**The RIAA has dropped a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in New York demanding that the four major Internet backbone service providers cut off access** to a China-based Web site providing pirated music since the site is now no longer online. Because the companies carry much of the Internet's long-haul traffic, their blocking of specific Web addresses would impact all Internet users regardless of their service provider.

The site <www.listen4ever.com> was registered in China, but targeted U.S. consumers since it was maintained in English and featured free music from top-selling US artists. The RIAA said it would revive the lawsuit if the site reappears with a new name or location.

**The film industry is also starting to feel the digital copying pinch.** The Fox theater chain and TV network is running public service announcements warning against copyright infringement in an effort to take the entertainment industry's war against online swapping of movies to the public.

**E-Babylon, Inc. (Simi Valley, Calif.) has agreed to pay a \$40,000 civil penalty** to settle Federal Trade Commission charges that they shipped "remanufactured" or generic ink jet replacement cartridges that were represented as being new, brand name products. The firm operates many Web sites - including <www.Pro-Inkjets.com> and <www.123inkjets.com>. In addition, their "no questions asked" refund policy proved difficult for many consumers. [FTC News Release]

**Both America Online and EarthLink (the No. 1 and 3 Internet provider)** have released new version software that blocks pop-up ads. The No. 2 ISP is MSN (Microsoft Network.)

**Blockbuster's is testing a DVD movie rental subscription service that is somewhat like Netflix** in four cities (New York City, Phoenix, Seattle and Houston.) The service, tentatively called DVD Freedom Pass, allows store customers to rent an unlimited number of titles each month for between \$20 and \$25 a month, depending on the city. Customers may have up to three titles out at any time, and are not assessed late fees. Netflix has nearly 700,000 subscribers that pay \$19.95 a month. We also heard that Wa-Mart was working on a competing online DVD rental

service. (See June 1st W5YI Report, Page 10.)

**Online retailer Amazon is allowing webmasters to link their Web site to its merchandise content** and earn commissions of up to 15 percent if the customer makes a purchase. Typical application might include linking keywords in articles or Web pages directly to Amazon databases. One developer has already set up an "Amazon Light" section in his website at: <www.kokogiak.com>.

**PayPal, the online payment firm that accepts credit card payments for other companies over the Internet,** has agreed to pay a \$200,000 penalty and block payments by its 1.1 million New York customers to illegal gambling Web sites. New York law prohibits online gambling. PayPal also said it would stop serving the online gambling industry in all states after its proposed \$1.5 billion merger with Internet auctioneer EBay is finalized. PayPal has 17.8 million accounts.

**In an effort to expand its audience and increase revenue, Major League Baseball streamed the first-ever game live over the Internet.** The August 26<sup>th</sup> New York Yankees and the Texas Rangers game was offered from start to finish to out-of-town fans who could not get the game locally.

Those who wanted to watch the Web-cast, which was made available at the League's Web site at <www.mlb.com> had to register using a credit card. If the billing address of the credit card was in the home market of either team, the prospective viewer was unable to access the part of the Web site that carried the game.

More than 130,000 people already pay to listen to audio broadcasts of baseball games over the Internet. The potential for video streaming over the Internet increases as more consumers get high speed Internet access. There was no charge for the Yankees-Rangers game, but MLB plans eventually to charge for the service.

**Useful tip. You can delete a file immediately, without sending it to the Recycle Bin** by selecting the item you wish to remove, and pressing Shift and Delete together. This is handy if you want to permanently get rid of a file in your attachment folder you suspect to contain a worm or virus. It saves you from having to empty the trash.

## WASHINGTON WHISPERS

**The number of new computer worms and malicious viruses is surprisingly less this year.** No one knows why, but there are a lot of theories.

Some say it is the introduction of improved anti-virus software, stiffer laws to deal with hackers, virus writers and cyber-crime and more cautious computer users.

Last year, the Code Red, Nimda and Sircam worms caused billions of dollars worth of damage. This year, the Klez e-mail worm is the big, and basically only, virus that is wildly making the rounds. It is easily controlled with anti-virus software.

**A new bill called the Cyber Security Enhancement Act of 2002 (H.R. 3482)** calls for a maximum prison term ranging from 10 years to life for hacking and virus-writing offenses.

Congressman Lamar Smith (R-TX), Chairman of the Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee, introduced the legislation.

He said "A mouse can be just as dangerous as a bullet or a bomb." The bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 385 to 3 on July 15<sup>th</sup>.

**The confirmation hearing for FCC nominee Jonathan Adelstein, a former Sen. Tom Daschle telecommunications and technology aide,** is working its way through the Senate. He was nominated by President Bush last February to fill out the fifth and last (Democratic) seat on the agency which became vacant after the resignation of Gloria Tristani.

Adelstein, a native of South Dakota, is considered to represent rural America despite the fact that his pedigree includes attending both Stanford and Harvard and pricey high school Phillips Academy, an independent prep school in Andover, Mass.. Their graduates include both of the Presidents Bush, "Jeb" Bush (Florida governor) and John F. Kennedy, Jr. (Academy award actors Jack Lemmon and Humphrey Bogart are also Andover Academy graduates.)

The elder George Bush just attended his 60<sup>th</sup> Phillips Academy reunion having graduated in 1942 where he was president of the senior class. Located 25 miles north of Boston, the academy was founded in 1778 and is the nation's oldest



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boarding high school. It costs nearly \$30 thousand a year to attend Phillips Academy where there is one faculty member for every six students.

**FCC Commissioner Michael Copps released a statement calling for fast and severe enforcement action against New York City radio station, WNEW-FM.** He said he has "...received many outraged e-mails and phone calls complaining about a running on-air broadcast of a sex act in St. Patrick's Cathedral" on Fifth Avenue and nearby Rockefeller Center as part of a radio stunt.

It seems the incident was part of an annual "Sex for Sam" contest arranged by two afternoon shock jock hosts ("Opie and Anthony") in which six couples were given a list of 54 different high-risk locations at which to have sex in New York City.

The prize was a free trip to Boston's Sam Adams/VH1 World-Class Summer Jam, a concert sponsored by Sam Adams beer. Sex in a church was worth 25 points.

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, a WNEW producer (Paul Mercurio) and a couple in their 30s (Brian Florence and Loretta Lynn Harper from Virginia) were arrested about 4 p.m. by NYC police. The couple were caught by a church usher having sex in a vestibule of St. Patrick's Cathedral crowded with parishioners worshipping just a few feet away at a "Feast of the Assumption" holy day mass.

The field producer was giving a live commentary via cell phone of the tryst from a corner of the Manhattan church over WNEW-FM. The couple have been charged with public lewdness, obscenity and exposure; the producer with "acting in concert."

The FM radio station, owned by Infinity Broadcasting Corp., could face revocation of their broadcast license. WNEW issued an apology for the sex in cathedral escapade and said it would not happen again.

On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, FCC Chairman Powell put the incident on a fast enforcement track and Infinity (headquartered in Washington, DC) was served with a formal Inquiry citation from the FCC's Enforcement Bureau.

That same day, Infinity Broadcasting suspended DJs "Opie and Anthony" and canceled new shows. They are now running re-runs. The show was issued a \$21,000 FCC fine for broadcasting other indecent content as recent as June 2002. But it did not deter Opie and Anthony from organizing the contest.

Actually, Infinity has long encouraged raunchy and outrageous on-air behavior. And one of their other New York City sta-

tions (WXRK-FM) is the home of Howard Stern. Stern has already cost Infinity more than \$1.5 million in FCC fines for his on-air conduct ...which continues.

No station has ever lost their license over indecent broadcast content. The Supreme Court in the now famous 1978 FCC v. Pacifica case wrote that such goings-on "...may be merely a right thing in the wrong place -- like a pig in the parlor instead of the barnyard."

The FCC's standard sanction for indecency cases is levying fines, and it often looks for signs of contrition and remedial action by offenders. We'll keep you posted on how this plays out.

## AMATEUR RADIO NEWS

**Looking for the exact text of an FCC rule?** The Commission has a very handy FCC Rule Online Search at: <[www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/bickel/47CFR-rule.html](http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/bickel/47CFR-rule.html)>. You simply enter the Part 97 (or any FCC) rule and the text is extracted from the current version of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR.) Try it!

**Next Russian space mission is planned to be a huge media event ...that's if it comes off at all.** Pop music idol, Lance Bass, a 23-year-old member of the 'N Sync band is scheduled to be the third tourist and youngest ever to travel to the International Space Station.

The Russian Aviation and Space Agency has informed its 16 international partners that it intends to deliver Bass to the space station on a Soyuz resupply capsule targeted for launch on or about October 28<sup>th</sup>.

He has been training in Star City, Russia for two months which is being filmed for use in a network TV mini-series called "Celebrity Mission: Lance Bass."

The series includes six one-hour "training" episodes, a two-hour "launch and in space" special, a "return to earth" episode ...concluding with an 'N Sync concert a week after his return. It will be aired in 40 countries.

Previous space tourists, Dennis Tito KG6FZX and Mark Shuttleworth, each paid their own way. And both used ham radio to talk back to earth.

This time, the reported \$20 million air fare is being paid by deep-pocketed commercial sponsors ...one of which we

heard was Radio Shack. Bass will look like a NASCAR race car driver ...a host of corporate logos adorning his spacesuit.

At press time, the required payment for the trip has not been received and Bass is in danger of being cut from the flight.

Although all current Space Station cosmonauts and astronauts (including American biochemist Peggy Whitson KC5ZTD) are licensed radioamateurs, there is no evidence Lance will hold a ham ticket.

But the flight engineer on the same space flight that takes Lance Bass to the Space Station is a Belgian licensed radio-amateur.

As many as 15 other "Celebrity Missions" to the Space Stations are in the planning stages.

**Belgium's second astronaut to go into space is Frank De Winne, ON1DWN.** He joined the Astronaut Corps of the European Space Agency (ESA) in January 2000. A senior test pilot in the Belgian Air Force, De Winne has been training at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre (GCTC), near Moscow for more than a year.

ON1DWN will journey to the International Space Station "Russian Segment" on Taxi flight No. 4. This will be the first flight of the newly designed Soyuz TMA Spacecraft.

He will be flight engineer on the 10-day mission, the main purpose of which is exchanging out the Soyuz capsule, which is permanently docked with the Station to serve as a rescue vehicle, if needed.

**Meanwhile, more than 100 youngsters at the 'spacecamp' at the Euro Space Centre in Belgium** were able to take part in an amateur radio link-up with American astronaut Peggy Whitson, KC5ZTD on the Space Station. An ARISS contact had been scheduled for the Euro Space Centre club station, ON4ESC. For 10 minutes, Peggy's voice filled the auditorium while she answered a dozen questions from the 8 to 15-year olds.

**Several "Fivemeggers" are operating under a "Notice of Variance" - or NoV - in the United Kingdom** as part of an experiment to carry out propagation studies, antenna experiments and some emergency radio training within the British Isles.

The Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) announced in July that the Radio communications Agency (RA) and the



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UK's Ministry of Defense had granted selected amateurs permission to use five frequencies in the 5250 kHz to 5450 kHz range.

There are now over 200 Full "Class A" UK license holders authorized to operate in the five 3-kHz bandwidth channels at 5260, 5280, 5290, 5400 and 5405 kHz. 5400 kHz is being used as the calling channel.

The experiment is being directed by RSGB Spectrum Director Gordon Adams, G3LEQ. Operators are required to report their findings and results to the RSGB. Activity in the UK has been on upper sideband. It is anticipated that the 5 MHz experiment will run for a period not exceeding four years.

A small group of U.S. radioamateurs are also operating on 5 MHz under the ARRL's Experimental license using the group call sign: WA2XSY. And there have been confirmed reception reports between the United States and the United Kingdom.

A transatlantic two-way QSO on 5 MHz is the next logical step, but it's unclear if WA2XSY participants are permitted to work the UK experimenters within the scope of the WA2XSY license. For more information on the UK experimental activity on 5 MHz, visit "The Fivemegs Experiment" page at <www.rs.gb.org/licensing/fivemegs/fivemegs.htm> on the RSGB Web site.

**The Dayton Amateur Radio Association Scholarship Committee has announced** the following students as award recipients for 2002:

Thomas A. Tenaglia, K3TAT	— \$1,500
William S. Bailey, KF4VAU	— \$1,000
Victoria R. Morgan, KF4PNI	— \$1,000
Nicholas D. Bishop, KG6JSA	— \$1,500
Jeanne N. Hansen, KB2RAP	— \$1,000
Sara K. Hanna, KE6MWX	— \$1,000
Jeffrey R. Doub, KC8IOC	— \$2,000
Michael J. Haessler, KB9TGF	— \$1,500
Amy M. Morris, KI6F	— \$1,500

**You may be hearing some unusual call sign prefixes on the ham bands.**

The Canadian licensing authority, Industry Canada, has authorized the use of special station call signs to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japanese immigration to Canada. The special prefixes will be on the air until the 31<sup>st</sup> of October. VE stations may substitute the prefix 'CK' in place of VE, VA stations may use 'CJ', VO stations can use the prefix 'CY', while VY stations can substitute CZ for their normal prefix.

**It is our understanding that the CITEL, the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission, a part of the Orga-**

**nization of American States (OAS) will also be supporting the United States position on WRC-03 Agenda Item 1.7.**

This agenda item is "...to consider issues concerning the amateur and amateur-satellite services." Item No. 1.7.1 considers a "...possible revision to Article S25" — the basic international rules applying the Amateur Service. S25 currently contains 11 paragraphs which is recommended to be reduced to six. (See August 15th W5YI Report, page 2 for the exact text.)

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., CITEL, is the Western Hemisphere's forum for coordinating telecommunication issues regionally. It consists of 35 member countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, United States of America, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. (Cuba, while a CITEL member, is excluded from participation in the OAS.)

## FCC Amateur Radio Enforcement

**Ramon D. Florimon KB2PRV (Elmhurst, NY)** was advised by the FCC on October 2, 2001 that his repeater operating on 448.975 MHz in Brooklyn, NY was apparently uncoordinated and operating without a control operator. He advised the FCC that the coordination documents would be forthcoming shortly, but so far they have not been received.

The FCC is closing the case, but warned Florimon that without coordination, his repeater would be responsible to resolve any interference. Furthermore he "must have a control operator at all times of repeater activity, and not allow the repeater to be used by unlicensed individuals."

**Gerald D. Hogue, KD5CYA (Conway, AR)** was advised by the FCC last February that both licensees of the KD5CYA and AC5RU repeaters were responsible for solving their mutual interference problem. The interference has worsened, appears to be deliberate and coming from users of the KD5CYA repeater. Furthermore, the FCC said it had information that Hogue intended to ignore the interference problem.

The FCC noted that AC5RU uses tone control, but KD5CYA does not and

that the KD5CYA repeater uses an automatic voice identifier every few minutes even when there is no traffic on the repeater. The voice ID states that the KD5CYA repeater is the "only coordinated repeater...."

The FCC directed Hogue to describe what steps he has taken to reduce the interference including any instructions given to KD5CYA repeater users. The FCC also wants to know all the technical parameters of his repeater.

The FCC added, "A decision by a licensee to operate a repeater system is a voluntary one, and we see no reason whatsoever why these two repeaters cannot co-exist without debilitating interference if your repeater is operated in good faith and with tone control. Failure to do so causes great harm to the Amateur Radio Service."

The FCC directed Hogue to disable the automatic voice ID when there is no traffic on his repeater and to implement tone control. Failure to take measures to reduce the interference will result in a requirement that a control operator be physically present at the KD5CYA control point during all repeater transmissions.

The FCC warned that it also anticipated taking enforcement action against Hogue's license and any users involved in the interference.

**Ronald B. Lewis, KC5BNN (Morriston, AR)** was warned by the FCC that it has information he has "on numerous occasions deliberately interfered with the operation of the AC5RU repeater system in your area."

"The AC5RU repeater system has every right to exist, just as the KD5CYA repeater system. It is in the best interests of Amateur Radio for the two systems to resolve their interference problems and there is no reason why they cannot do so."

"The Commission will not tolerate deliberate interference between the two repeaters, whether such interference is from a transmission by one of the repeaters or individually by a user of one of the repeaters using separate equipment to degrade the other repeater."

Lewis was told that if he persists with the interference, enforcement action will be taken against his license which will include a fine. His license is due for renewal in June 2003 and "Until this matter is resolved, it will not be routinely renewed." Lewis was asked to contact the FCC to discuss this matter.



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## WIRELESS "WI-FI" BATTLE PITS FREE VS. PAID CONNECTIVITY

A news article in the August 19<sup>th</sup> (Portland) *Oregonian* newspaper points out what happens when two radio spectrum users occupy the same bandwidth at the same time. They interfere with each other.

Usually one of the radio services is the primary licensed user and others sharing the frequency must not interfere. Such is not the case with "Wi-Fi" unlicensed shared spectrum. It is literally a free for all.

"Wi-Fi" or Wireless Fidelity is a radio technology that allows users to connect their laptop computers wirelessly to the Internet at high speeds. It uses the wireless IEEE "802.11b" protocol which allows speeds up to 11 Mbps.

The user must be located in an access zone, an area covered by the service which can extend from a few feet to several hundred feet. Access points installed in a wireless access zone transmits a radio signal to a user's Wi-Fi 802.11b wireless network card.

Users simply launch their browser and receive a log-in page to enter a user name and password. Once verified, customers have full connectivity to the Internet, as well as any corporate networks to which they have access from the Internet.

### T-Mobile Wireless. Who are they?

More than a thousand Starbucks coffeehouses have installed high-speed wireless "hotspot" internet service from "T-Mobile." Based in Bellevue, Wash., T-Mobile USA is a commercial wireless networking service that was acquired by the "VoiceStream Wireless Network."

As of last year, VoiceStream, is part of German-based Deutsche Telekom, Europe's largest communications company with 18 thousand employees and \$50 billion in revenue. The company is in the process of changing its VoiceStream brand name in the United States to T-Mobile. See: <[www.voicestream.com/products](http://www.voicestream.com/products)>.

The T-Mobile HotSpot service provides "T1" speed wireless Internet access in public locations such as airports, Starbucks and the American Airlines frequent flyer "Admirals Club." There are currently 1,211 T-Mobile HotSpots and with plans for 1,500 locations by year-end. Wireless Internet connectivity is planned to be big business.

For example, here in Texas, there are T-Mobile access points in every terminal at the Dallas-Fort Worth airport, at Love Field (the downtown Dallas airport), at the DFW airport car rental counter, at the Austin airport, at all "Admirals Clubs" and more than 200 Starbucks.

Most business people use it for e-mail and downloading needed files from their office. Users can also access any web-based email account such as Yahoo.com or Hotmail.com. At Starbucks coffeehouses, customers surf the Internet at speeds of up to 50 times faster than a dial-up.

You need three things to operate through a T-Mobile HotSpot. First, you need to open an account which can be done at hundreds of shopping malls around the coun-

try. Cost is \$29.99 a month for unlimited local access (plus 15¢ minute if out of your local area.) Unlimited national service costs \$49.99. Both include up to 500 MB of data transfer (accessing about 900 web pages.) All service is billed to a credit card and you must sign up for a minimum of a year. You can also purchase 15 hours of access time for \$2.99, 20 hours for \$20.

Second, your laptop or PocketPC must be enabled with a special "Wi-Fi 802.11b" wireless ethernet card. And you also must have a standard Internet-ready browser (such as Microsoft's *Explorer* or the Netscape *Navigator*) on any operating system. (Palm devices won't work since they use a proprietary web browser.) No additional software is required.

### Battle brews between amateurs and professionals

The 802.11b standard defines a total of 14 direct sequence spread spectrum channels at 2.4 GHz. The FCC allows channels 1 through 11 within the U.S.; whereas, most of Europe can use channels 1 through 13. In Japan, you have only one choice: channel 14. The U.S. channels are staggered every few megahertz from 2400 to 2483.5 MHz.

Part 15.247(b)(1) permits a maximum output power of one watt. In practicality, you can have only three operational frequencies in a given area. This spectrum is also allocated to the U.S. Amateur Service which has priority over unlicensed Part 15 devices.

"Personal Telco" is actually a bunch of volunteers; computer hobbyists who have banded together to provide free wireless access points around Portland, Oregon. It was founded by Adam Shand.

Aided by donations, for the past two years Personal Telco has provided about 70 free Internet wireless access points throughout the Portland area. Web surfers near the access points can tap into the Internet signal at no cost, whatsoever. To use a Personal Telco connection, users type in an identification number, available on the group's Web site at <[www.personaltelco.net](http://www.personaltelco.net)> or simply search for the Internet connection. One of their access points is adjacent to the Pioneer Courthouse Square shopping mall.

What has happened now, is that T-Mobile has taken over channels that are being used by Personal Telco.

Starbucks at Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square are selling T-Mobile wireless connections for a fee on the same channel that Personal Telco has provided for free in the mall since February. The group was the first to use Wi-Fi 802.11b technology and in similar disputes, incumbents normally retain their wireless channels.

Now that Starbucks is operating on the same community channel, Personal Telco users are obtaining serious co-channel interference, slower connections and decreased performance.

But things may get better. We just heard that T-Mobile engineers have now agreed to install software that allows them to seek clear channels, thereby avoiding interference with other local Wi-Fi networks.